

FORM B – BUILDING

BKL 3024

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number	USGS Quad	Area(s)	Form Number
081/09	Boston So.	CE	3024

Town Brookline

Place (neighborhood or village) Coolidge Corner



Sketch Map



Address 16 Williams Street

Common Name

Present Lodging House

Original Boarding House

Construction 1895-96

Building permits

Form Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder Charles E. Park/ Morrison & Mackley

Primary Material:

Foundation brick

Wall/Trim vinyl siding/wood

Roof asphalt

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

none

Major Alterations (with dates)

1948: add fire escape

1987: addition on rear

1990: asbestos shingles replaced with vinyl siding;
handicapped ramp added

Condition good

Moved ☐ no ☐ yes Date

Acreage 6,600 s.f.

Recorded by R.G. Reed

Organization Brookline Preservation Commission

Date (month / year) 12/03

RECEIVED

FEB 20 2004

MASS. HIST. COMM

Setting The building is located on a residential street within a block of Harvard Street, one of the principal commercial districts in Brookline. The buildings on Williams Street are multi-family and a mixture of converted single-family homes, modern apartment blocks and a synagogue.

BUILDING FORM**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION** ☐ *see continuation sheet*

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The building is three stories high, wood frame with a low pitched hip roof. The cornice for the roof includes block modillions and dentils. The principal façade is five bays wide with a central entrance. Extending across the entire façade is a Colonial Revival style porch with Tuscan columns supporting a full entablature, including a cornice with block modillions. The hand railing for the porch has turned wood balusters, except for the steps which have iron. The main entrance consists of a large paneled door with sidelights and a fanlight. Directly above, the second floor hall windows is in three parts framed by pilasters and an entablature. A principal character-defining feature of the building is the windows, which are wood double hung sash with fifteen over one lights. There is one brick chimney on the west slope of the roof.

The interior of the building retains many original features, including the floor plan, staircase and door and window trim.

In 1947 there was a fire in the building, possibly in the attic which resulted in the loss of one of the chimneys. A year later a fire escape was added to the east side of the building and a door cut out of a window. It was probably at that time that asbestos shingles were applied to the exterior.

In 1987 the dining room was enlarged with a new addition on the rear. Three bedrooms were also added on the second floor above the new dining space. The asbestos shingles were replaced with vinyl siding in 1990 and a handicapped access added.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ☐ *see continuation sheet*

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

In 1895 this area north of Beacon Street was just entering a period of intense development that transformed the area from farmland. The construction of a trolley line along Beacon and Harvard Streets to Allston initiated many small sub-divisions of this area. At the time, large single family homes were being built and commercial development was restricted to Coolidge Corner. Boston architect Charles Park was very active in working for developers in North Brookline, usually working in the Colonial Revival style. James J. Morgan hired Park to build a boarding house in an area of large single-family homes. Park patterned his Colonial Revival style design after the Federal Period architecture of Salem. Morgan quickly sold the building to Laura E. Newcomb, a resident of New York. Emily V. Stone became the local manager of the boarding house.

The building has, throughout its history provided respectable housing for individuals who could not afford a single family home, or preferred not to live in an apartment where they would have to cook for themselves. The first record of the number of occupants is in 1919, when Mary T. Meek applied for a lodging house license for eight people. A year later she was granted approval for 13 people. In 1973 Humanity House, Inc., obtained approval to operate a lodging house for 16 multi-handicapped individuals. The most substantial change occurred in 1987 when architect Malcolm Blier designed a two-story addition on the rear to provide a larger dining hall space and three more bedrooms.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES ☐ *see continuation sheet*

Town Building Permits and Board of Appeals Records
Town directories and historical atlases

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*



CLGC OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTERB
Farm
BKL 3024m

Date Received: N/A

Date Reviewed: N/A

Type: Individual

District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name:

Inventory Form: 3024

Address: 16 Williams Street

Action: Honor

ITC

Grant

CLGC initiated

Other:

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

- ☒ Eligible
☐ Eligible, also in district
☐ Eligible only in district
☐ Ineligible
☐ More information needed

DISTRICTS

- ☐ Eligible
☐ Ineligible
☐ More information needed

CRITERIA:

A

B

C

D

LEVEL:

Local

State

National

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE by _____

(Refer to criteria cited above in statement of significance. If more information is needed, use space to describe what is needed to finish eligibility opinion.)

The building at 16 Williams Street is eligible for listing in the National Register as an early surviving boarding house designed in scale, materials and style to be harmonious with the late nineteenth century single-family homes in the neighborhood. The architect, Charles E. Park, designed a large number of Colonial Revival style houses in North Brookline. The design for 16 Williams Street was inspired by the three-story residential designs of early nineteenth century New England. Although now synonymous with low income housing, a boarding house at the turn-of-the-twentieth century offered unmarried men and women an opportunity to rent a room and have meals prepared in a common dining room. These accommodations were considered very respectable and provided a social environment similar to a private home. Now used as lodging house for people with developmental disabilities, the building continues to offer rooms to rent along with prepared meals. The property is eligible under criterion C.

James J. Morgan hired architect Charles J. Park to design this boarding house in November 1895. It was completed in the next year. At that time the land along Harvard Street was just beginning to be developed for single-family homes following the construction of the trolley line on Beacon Street. At first the line from Boston extended out Beacon Street to Coolidge Corner, then turned up Harvard Street to Allston. The neighborhood of Williams Street was ideal for development as a "streetcar suburb". James Morgan apparently constructed this building sale, as it was shortly after acquired by Laura E. Newcomb, a resident of New York. Emily V. Stone became the local manager of the boarding house.

In 1919 the then-owner of the property, Mrs. Mary T. Meek, applied to the Board of Appeals for a lodging house license for eight people. A year later, approval was obtained for 13 lodgers. It is not known if these applications were related to changes in laws for boarding houses. There was fire damage to the building, apparently in the attic, in 1947. A year later the town required improvements, including the addition of a fire escape on the east side. Asbestos shingles were added, probably at the same time. In 1973 Humanity House, Inc., obtained Board of Appeals approval to provide for 16 multi-handicapped lodgers. The most substantial change to the building occurred in 1987 when an addition was made to the rear. Architect Malcom A. Blier enlarged the dining room space on the ground floor and added three bedrooms on the second floor above. A handicapped ramp was added in 1990, and the asbestos shingles were replaced with vinyl siding.

Important architectural features of the house include the wide eaves with a wood cornice supported on block modillions above rows of dentils, the larger stairhall windows on the second and third stories, the long Colonial Revival style veranda across the front of the building, and the original windows, which have fifteen over one lights.

MHC STAFF OPINION

Date Received: 2/20/04

Date Reviewed: 3/24/04

Opinion:

Concur

Disagree

More information needed

See Reverse for Comments

MHC finds this property also eligible
 under Criterion A for its historical
 association with the development of
 Brookline in the late 19th / early 20th century.